

REMARKS

The Office Action sets forth a restriction requirement. In particular, the Office Action found that the instant application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct inventions: Invention I, claims 1-98 and 100-113, drawn to absorbent compositions, classified in class 424, subclass 076.1 and Invention II, claim 99, drawn to a litter box, classified in class 119, subclass 165.

Applicants elect, with traverse, Invention I, claims 1-98 and 100-113 for prosecution on the merits. Applicants respectfully submit that a thorough examination of all claims at the same time would not require an undue burden on the Examiner.

The Office Action further sets forth that the instant application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species:

- a. claims 1-20 and 102-104 drawn to an absorbent composition comprising particles of an absorbent material and 0.01% to about 50% activated alumina particles;
- b. claims 21-39 and 100 drawn to an absorbent composition comprising 0-50% of at least one additive and up to 100% activated alumina;
- c. claims 40-98 drawn to a composite particle comprising an absorbent material formed into a particle and activated alumina added to the absorbent material;
- d. claim 101 drawn to an absorbent composition comprising particles of an absorbent material and secondary particles selected from a group consisting of activated alumina and zeolite;
- e. claims 105-112, drawn to an absorbent composition comprising particles of an absorbent material and colored particles mixed with the particles of absorbent material.

Applicants note that claim 113, drawn to an absorbent material and zeolite added to the absorbent material was not identified by the Examiner as belonging to groups a-e. For clarity, Applicants are cancelling claim 113.

Claims 1-99 and 102-113 are cancelled without prejudice. Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue these claims in a divisional application. New claims 114-127 have been added by this amendment. Applicants submit that new claims 114-127 add no

new matter and are fully supported by Applicants' specification. For example, support for new claims 114-127 can be found in paragraphs [0033]-[0043], [0054]-[0057] and the original claims.

Applicants submit that claims 101 and 114-127 read on the elected species.

CONCLUSION

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney. In the unlikely event that the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required as a result of this statement, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Assistant Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due to our Deposit account number 032270. However, the Assistant Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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